

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 6, 2004. Claims 1-31 were pending. By this Amendment, Applicant has added new dependent claims 32 and 33. Accordingly, claims 1-33 are now pending, with claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 being in independent form.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9-14, 18-22, 25 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,445 to Bashoura et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,437,871 to Yuki. Claim 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura. Claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 15-17, 21, 23-25, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Yuki and U.S. Patent No. 5,381,527 to Inniss et al. Claims 27 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Inniss.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application is directed to improvements to network facsimile operations. Generally, a network facsimile device has a built-in scanner for scanning a document and outputting image information corresponding to the scanned document. The network facsimile device can transmit the image information through

plural communication modes (for example, by electronic mail, by real time Internet communication, by facsimile communication through a public network, etc.) to a specified destination address (for example, an e-mail address, an IP address, a telephone number, etc.). Conventional network facsimile devices typically require the user to input the destination address, character by character.

Applicant devised improvements to network facsimile devices including providing means for registering for each destination a plurality of address information (for example, an IP address, an electronic mail address and a telephone number) corresponding to plural respective communication modes for transmitting the document image information to the destination. Subsequently, an operator can quickly, through use of an input means of the network facsimile device, designate one of the addresses registered for a destination to which the document image information is to be transmitted, and the document image information is transmitted to the designated address. Because the address information is registered, the operator need not input the destination address character-by-character, and a reduced number of keys is required for selecting the destination address to which designated image information is to be communicated.

For example, independent claim 1 is directed to a network facsimile device having such features, including input means for

operator input of information identifying a plurality of destination addresses, including for each destination a plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses associated with a desired destination to which the document image information is to be transmitted.

Bashoura, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a fax director device which can be connected to a standard facsimile machine and a personal computer, to perform fax routing for transmissions from the standard fax machine, without adapting the fax machine. The standard fax machine of Bashoura allows an operator to enter a telephone number, and does not have a built-in capability of communicating in a selected one of plural communication modes (such as electronic mail, real time Internet communication, etc., in addition to facsimile communication through a public network). The fax director decodes a telephone number, specified by a user of the facsimile machine, which is encoded by the fax machine in a facsimile transmission, and then compares the decoded telephone number to a look-up table. If an Internet address corresponding to the decoded telephone number is found in the table, the fax is automatically (i) downloaded from the fax machine, (ii) converted to a computer file, and (iii) then sent to the matched Internet address.

The objective of Bashoura is to avoid the expense of a toll

call for the facsimile transmission. The rerouting of the transmission through the Internet is transparent to the user. The fax director of Bashoura does not simplify the address selection process for the user. The user is not presented with a choice of plural communication modes.

Yuki does not cure the deficiencies of Bashoura.

Yuki, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a facsimile apparatus with adaptors for communications with plural partners through a public switched telephone network, a local area network and an integrated services digital network, respectively. A one-touch dial memory portion stores for each destination a telephone number, an IP address and cost information. When the user selects a destination for a facsimile, a CPU automatically (a) retrieves the data for the destination in the one-touch dial memory portion, (b) determines the cheapest communication mode for transmitting the facsimile to the destination, and (c) transmits the facsimile to the destination via the cheapest communication mode. The user is not presented with a choice of the communication modes.

Therefore, Yuki, like Bashoura, does not disclose or suggest a network facsimile device including input means for operator designation of one address among the plurality of addresses associated with a desired destination to which the document image information is to be transmitted, as set forth in claim 1.

Inniss, as understood by Applicant, is directed to a system

for distribution of messages through one of plural prioritized distribution channels (such as facsimile transmission, voice communication by telephone, electronic mail, voice mail, etc.). The Office Action cites Inniss as disclosing prioritizing the communication modes.

Applicant does not find disclosure or suggestion in the cited art, however, of a network facsimile device which comprises (a) scanner means which scans a document and generates document image information corresponding to the scanned document, (b) input means for operator input of information identifying a plurality of destination addresses, including for each destination a plurality of address information respectively corresponding to a plurality of communication modes through which designated image information can be transmitted to a designated destination, and for designating one address among the plurality of addresses, and (c) address information registering means for registering the plurality of address information respectively corresponding to the plurality of communication modes, input by the operator through the input means, for each destination, as provided by independent claim 1.

Since the cited art does not disclose or suggest each and every feature of the claimed invention, claim 1 is believed to be allowable thereover. Independent claims 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentable over the cited art for at least similar reasons.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make

this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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